



# The Opportunist

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## *Summer Scholars Project: Time Allocation, Sleep, and Academic Achievement in the Student Population*

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The study of economics focuses on the allocation of resources under the assumption of scarcity. Perhaps the scarcest resource to the human race is time. Sleep occupies roughly a third of a person's life and for this reason, the importance of understanding sleep behaviors cannot be underestimated.

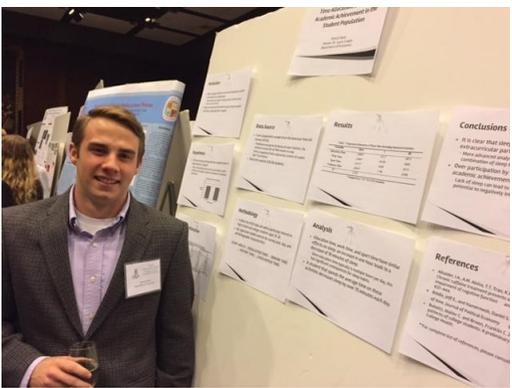
Common public sentiment believes that the student population does not receive enough sleep each night. Due to the negative effects associated with sleep loss and sleepiness, it is important to understand the implications of a sleepy student population. The first aspect of my research deals with conducting my own analysis to determine if public views are correct. Using time diary data, I find that the student population on school nights tends to sleep a little more than eight hours (including daytime naps). These results suggest that the public has an incorrect perception of time spent sleeping. The inconsistency between perceived and recorded sleep time could be a result of an increasingly hectic daily life.

Students tend to be involved in a variety of on-campus clubs, sports, and other recreational activities. Moreover, 25% of the student population worked on the day that they responded to the time use survey. With increasing participation in these activities, there must be a trade-off due to the finite hours in a day. With less free time, the trade-off between activities becomes increasingly more important due to the opportunity costs of the expense of foregoing one activity to dedicate attention to another -- particularly if time is taken away from academic activities.

My analysis concentrates on determining which activities tend to take away the most time from sleep and time spent focusing on academics. Sleep and academic time are of particular importance due to knowledge that adequate nighttime sleep has the ability to increase cognitive functioning and time spent on academics has been shown to be a reliable predictor of academic success. My initial results suggest that working a short, two hour shift has an impact of decreasing homework time by 1/8 on that day. Working on a given day also negatively impacts the sleep that a student will get that night.

With an ever more involved student population in high school and college, it is important to consider if students are dedicating time to the correct combination of activities that work towards building human capital and higher academic achievement. Tasks that take away from sleep and academic time inevitably work against the goal of higher academic achievement and human capital accumulation.

Patrick Ryan, '18  
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. Laura Crispin  
 Supported by SJU Summer Scholars Program



## *What Trump Means for Us*

With the presidential election finally over, it is important to assess the coming years with an open mind but also a discerning one. Here I will present an unbiased overview of what may come under the Trump administration geared toward college students preparing for their entrance into the real world and those already a part of it. This will include provisions from his most fundamental platforms: tax and trade. As an important reminder, the world is constantly shifting economically and socially, and so too is the United States as it endures through the years.

To begin with taxes, Donald Trump has proposed to lower the corporate tax income rate from 35% to 15%, a massive reduction. The main goal is not only to put more money into the pockets of US businesses, but also to create incentives for companies to come back into the country that have outsourced. That being said, Trump also wants to put a tax on all future profits of foreign subsidiaries of US companies, which also creates high incentive to sell and make products domestically. Thus, in theory this plan would bring companies back to the US along with many middle-class wage jobs, boosting both the middle-class as well as the economy as a whole. How would one argue against lowering the corporate tax rate? To put it simply, the federal government is losing out on too much tax revenue (roughly eleven trillion dollars over the next ten years according to the Tax Policy Center's analysis). As stated earlier, the government is constantly experimenting, which means that this could either work very well, moderately in either direction, or not at all.

Trump's individual income tax is a simplification of the system already in place. It would cut down the current seven bracket tax set-up to three brackets, 10%, 20%, and 25%. This plan also includes multiple tax breaks for individuals under certain circumstances. The plan goes into more detail regarding long-term capital gains and dividends, and I encourage readers to research this further.

Trade will undoubtedly play a central role in Trump's term due to our current deficit situation. Trump plans to eliminate the trans-pacific partnership (which China is notably not a member of), label China a currency manipulator resulting in further taxes and tariffs, and finally appoint notable trade negotiators in his presidency. This could greatly lower our deficit and, in the best case scenario, allow us to start paying off our almost 20 trillion dollar debt.

Trump has not said much on the topic of student loans, especially when compared to Bernie Sanders. To put it simply, he has not provided any immediate solution to this ever growing problem of student loans. However, he has stated that his main focus is on creating good jobs in the private sector for students graduating college. In addition to this, he has urged colleges to be more strict in their acceptance rates and he wants to reconstruct student loans in reference to the Student Loans Forgiveness Programs. All of this is very vague, and I personally believe that as far as our student loans here at Saint Joseph's are concerned, Trump will not have any massive or immediate impact on our situation.

No matter where you stand politically, there are a few points to be aware of during Donald Trump's presidency. One should know that the Republican Party does control the house, senate, and presidency, which will bring efficiency in our policy making in reference to time. Finally, after watching and analyzing Trump's post-election win, one could argue heavily towards seeing a more moderate, mellow Donald. It seems as though after meeting with current high ranking officials, such as Barack Obama, he may have a greater insight on the benefits of moderation in policy and in his own disposition.

-Evan Addis '18

"Analysis Of Donald Trump's Tax Plan". 2016. *Tax Policy Center*. Accessed December 12 2016. <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org/publications/analysis-donald-trumps-tax-plan/full>.

"Here Is What Donald Trump Wants To Do In His First 100 Days". 2016. *NPR.Org*. Accessed December 12 2016. <http://www.npr.org/2016/11/09/501451368/here-is-what-donald-trump-wants-to-do-in-his-first-100-days>.

## News: Entertainment Merger

Currently in the realm of antitrust news, AT&T is in the process of merging with Time Warner Cable. This merger could potential rival some of the biggest mergers in history and with it, AT&T would gain control over invaluable brands in television, film, sports, news, video games, and internet service.

The deal is expected to be worth about \$86 billion and highlights one of the most definitive trends of the modern media business: the push from tech and telecommunications giants to control the lucrative, popular content they once passively supplied.

This deal comes with both pros and cons. One of the pros includes a potential competitor to cable. In an interview with CNBC, Time Warner CEO Jeff Bewkes stated, "You'd have more packages. If you want a package of more channels, fewer channels, you want it mobile, you want it in your house across all your screens." This would also draw in advertisers that would cover cost of programming which could lower cost to consumers and the use of AT&T data could target consumers with more relevant offers providing more competition to Google and Facebook. One potential downside is the potential of the consolidation creating higher prices. Contrary to the belief that a colossal merger would change the dynamics of competition which would cause a lowering of prices, in the past there has typically been a lack of lowered costs for consumers. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) commissioner Michael Copps says "further entrenching monopoly harms innovation and drives up prices for consumers."

This isn't the first time federal officials have felt that a potential merger would be harmful to consumers. In 2015, The FCC and the Department of Justice stopped the purchase of Time Warner Cable by Comcast. The rationale behind the blockage was that the deal would give Comcast too many Internet subscribers to the point where it could be used as bargaining chips against online businesses.

The debate over whether a merger is too big has occurred many times with some stating that it drives innovation while other says it hurts consumer welfare. All of which are things federal officials must take into consideration when they determine whether a merger is lawful.

-Jarrett Hurms '18

"The AT&T-Time Warner Merger: What Are The Pros And Cons For Consumers?". 2016. *NPR.Org*. Accessed Oct. 25 2016. <http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2016/10/25/499185907/the-at-t-time-warner-merger-what-are-the-pros-and-cons-for-consumers>.

## Announcements

### Upcoming Spring Events:

- ◆ Bureau of Labor Statistics Presentation: March 30
- ◆ Distinguished Guest Speaker Event
- ◆ Panel on Economics and Immigration
- ◆ Tee-Shirt Orders
- ◆ Farewell to Seniors/End of the Year Department Party

—Happy Holidays!

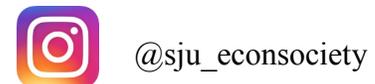




## *SJU Economics on Social Media*

In an effort to connect our students, faculty, alumni, and employers in real time, the Economics Department maintains its social media efforts. All are encouraged to follow the department on Facebook and Twitter. Using these sites, we'll be posting alumni updates and congratulations, job listings for economics students, departmental events, and university updates. Dr. Crispin also live-tweets with photos from major department events like Alumni Networking Nights and graduation. If you have any updates or information that you'd like to share, please email Dr. Crispin at [lcrispin@sju.edu](mailto:lcrispin@sju.edu).

We also encourage all of our current students and alumni to get "linked in" with one another. This will help to facilitate informal networking outside of our official networking night. The Undergraduate Economics Society has a group on Linked In (search for Saint Joseph's University Undergraduate Economic Society) that all are welcome to join. Please contact the Economics Society President, John Degnan, or any of the Board Members for more details.



## *Call for Alumni Volunteers*

Interested in participating in a future panel? We're always looking for alumni to return to Hawk Hill and share their experiences with us! Please contact Dr. Laura Crispin to discuss ([lcrispin@sju.edu](mailto:lcrispin@sju.edu)).

## *Internships*

Interested in an internship? Stop by the Economics Department located in 107 Barbelin Hall to speak with Dr. Bookman or contact her at [mbookman@sju.edu](mailto:mbookman@sju.edu). Learn more about the companies that hire our majors and where current Econ students are interning. Our internship class, ECN 491, is held throughout the year so be sure to stop by! You don't want to miss out on an amazing opportunity!

## *Your Opportunity to Write for The Opportunist!*

One good way to beef-up your resume is to write for The Opportunist. The Opportunist is the Economics Department's newsletter and we need more students who can provide articles. What will you do? Maybe you would interview an Economics graduate or a professor or write an article on the world economy today. Or maybe you have something to say. If you are interested please let Dori know and the staff will contact you and prep you for the next issue.

-Dr. Crispin

For more information, contact Dori Pappas at:  
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610.660.1593

